Turtle Flambeau - Trude Lake

Property Owners' Association, Inc.

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the Great Addition

— by Roger Jasinski, Property Manager Turtle Flambeau Scenic Waters Area

On Sunday, August 22, 1999, Governor Thompson announced the acquisition of over 32,000 acres of land from Packaging Corporation of America (PCA) for $25 million. The media has dubbed this most recent land purchase the "Great Addition" because it complements other recent state acquisitions including the original Turtle Flambeau Flowage purchase and the Willow Flowage purchase.

Of the 32,000 acre total, 5,455 acres is located within the established project boundaries of the Turtle Flambeau Scenic Waters Area. These boundaries were developed during the master planning process for the Flowage which was concluded in March, 1995. The master plan also includes details on how all state owned lands, including new acquisitions, within the boundary will be managed.

The new acquisition around the Flowage includes very little lakeshore frontage, but it does include significant blocks of backlands important to protecting this wonderful resource. The new lands are primarily concentrated in four areas:

1. The interior of Big Island; the entire island is now in public ownership.
2. Lands adjacent to Murray's Landing Road making the area between the Flowage and the Northern Highland State Forest a contiguous block of public land.
3. Significant blocks of the patterned bog located southeast of the Horseshoe Lake area. This is the largest wetland draining directly to the Flowage.
4. A large block located between Wilson Lake and the Flowage. This new land provides additional shoreline buffer in an area where the existing buffer was minimal.

Most people will notice little difference in how these lands are managed now, under State ownership, compared to how they were managed by PCA. However, the master plan does call for some greater restrictions in the type of logging practices which will occur.

A lot of attention has been focused on the tax implications to local governments. PCA has it's lands entered under the managed forest law which means property taxes local governments currently receive on these lands is minimal. Under state ownership, the lands will be withdrawn from the managed forest program and the DNR will pay taxes under Section 70.14 of the State Statutes. Town and county governments, as well as local school districts, all stand to gain. William Smith, the DNR Northern Region Director and some of his staff will be meeting with the Iron County board this winter to explain the tax implications as well as other details of the purchase. Watch your county board agenda if you are interested in hearing this presentation.

Words from the President

by Paul Gottwald

We had an excellent Board of Directors meeting in October. We changed the date from Monday to Saturday as we heard from some of you that Saturday would be a better day to meet. The idea was excellent — we had sixteen members in attendance.

Volunteers stepped forward at the meeting to work on our projects:

- ✕ Newsletter assembly: Tom Mowbray
- ✕ Purple Loostrife: Frank and Liz Kilgore
- ✕ Walleye Watch: Lynn Schlueter.

The Board voted to join the Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Inc. (WAL). WAL is a statewide group of lake associations like ours. The organization promotes good use of our lakes, works on solutions to problems, keeps an eye on legalization that affects lakes and keeps us informed on what is happening.

We encourage you to let us know how our organization can serve you.

Next newsletter deadline

April 15, 2000

Trumpeter Swans are gaining

*— From **Bridges**, Fall 1999*
Published by Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin

The Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin had good reason to celebrate this summer. Due to the efforts of the twelve-year-old "Wisconsin Trumpeter Swan Recovery Program," 30 active trumpeter swan nests were found between mid-May and mid-July. This number is up from 18 in 1998 — a 67% increase! This brings the program past its original goal of establishing a breeding, migratory flock of at least 20 nesting pairs in the state by the year 2000. The recovery goal for trumpeters in Wisconsin may be revised, however. A population viability model utilizing over 10 years of data collected from Wisconsin's introduced flock will point to the number of nesting pairs and nesting success needed to maintain a self-sustaining population in our state. Of the 30 nests found, 11 are at sites that have never been used before, five were at new sites established in central Wisconsin, and five in the Iron/Ashland county area. More than 80 cygnets had hatched out by the end of June. At least 66 were still alive as of mid-August.

Trumpeter Swans, an endangered native migratory species, were all but extirpated by hunting before being put under government protection in 1935. Wisconsin's Trumpeter Swan Recovery program, and all those who have worked for and supported it over the past several years, have earned our gratitude for bringing this magnificent bird back to our state.

The NRF staff is also rejoicing over the growing participation in the "Adopt-a-Swan" program. They wholeheartedly thank the 146 adopters who donated $17,425 to the swan program this year. This is 30 more adoptions and $3,018 more than last year! Since 1994, swan adopters have donated over $50,000 to Wisconsin's Trumpeter Swan Recovery Program. In June of last year, Christa Reinert, a DNR intern, spoke at the TFF-TL Association annual membership meeting. Ms. Reinert was part of a team of DNR researchers that raised a brood of Trumpeter Swans from eggs for release here in Iron County. From 50 eggs, 35 cygnets survived, were acclimated, and released into the wild. At that meeting, Ms. Reinert described the Adopt-a-Swan program and encouraged our participation at either the $100.00 or the $250.00 level. The matter was discussed but no action was taken at that time.

Fall gardening is for the birds!

— Excerpts from Bird Watcher's Digest, September/October 1999

Each fall, many gardeners pull out spent annuals, trim back ragged perennials and rake up every leaf under each shrub. They hesitate to leave debris in the landscape for fear it will harbor unwanted pests. Remember, those overwintering pests are next year's food supply for insect eating birds.

If your goal is to attract birds, then why not set the table for them? Will this increase the unwanted bug life in your garden? Not noticeably, assures James Klett, horticulture professor at Colorado State University. Insects find many places to hibernate for the winter and when you expose them after your spring clean up, the birds will have a smorgasbord just about the time they need energy for migrating, nest building, or feeding young. Some gardeners are of the belief that they need to "put their garden to bed" in the fall. There is no biological reason to put your garden to bed, only a psychological one. For those gardeners living in cold and snowy climates, the winter can be dreary enough. Chop off all the perennials to the ground and dig up the annuals and the landscape can be pretty monotonous. Leaving perennial and annual stalks to poke through winter snow gives a pleasing winter appeal to these plants.

Refraining from deadheading in the fall assures that seed eating birds will have food as flower heads die and seeds fall to the ground. It leaves a valuable natural food supply for birds migrating back south, as well as for the year-round residents needing to fatten up before the long cold winter months. Each fall, American goldfinches, black capped chickadees, dark eyed juncos, and finches can be seen feasting on the seeds of purple coneflower, liatris, sunflower, zinnia, aster, bachelor button, black-eyed Susan, coreopsis and a variety of others. Come spring, white-crowned and chipping sparrows will wander through your garden picking up the leftovers.

In other words, don't be a "neatnik," apply a little chaos theory, have a shabby, wonderful garden and, with any luck, enjoy the sounds of young birds next spring.

Volunteers needed

If you are concerned about the future of walleye fishing on the Turtle Flambeau Flowage, there is something you can do to help. A large percentage of the walleye in the Turtle Flambeau Flowage spawn on the rocks below the dam at Lake of the Falls county park. At the height of the spring spawning run there are hundreds of fish in the area. These spawning walleye are very vulnerable to being taken illegally. While the vast majority of people who come to see these fish leave only with memories, some are taking your fish. Due to the large number of spawning areas in Iron County, Warden Pfeiffer does not have enough time to adequately protect the fish at the Lake of the Falls. You can help.

Conservation Warden Stuart Pfeiffer, in cooperation with your friends and neighbors, is starting a volunteer walleye watch program to protect the fish at the Lake of the Falls. This type of program has been implemented in other areas and has been extremely successful in protecting spawning walleye and sturgeon. All that is required is a few hours of your time. Walleye Watch is about volunteers watching over the activity at popular spawning sites to deter a few bad apples from taking fish illegally. Volunteers

work in groups of two or more and would be stationed in the shelter by the falls. Warden Pfeiffer will provide baseball style caps identifying you as a "Walleye Watch" volunteer, informational pamphlets about the walleye life cycle to hand out to visitors (if you are interested) and a two-way radio for communicating with Warden Pfeiffer. Warden Pfeiffer suggests that you dress warmly, *bring coffee*, and go home when you are tired.

It is extremely rare that anyone has illegally taken a fish in the presence of a walleye watch volunteer. If this would happen it is not expected that you would do anything about it. If you wish you could write down what you see and/or call Warden Pfeiffer on the radio. This program isn't about catching poachers, it's about protecting the fish. Your presence is enough to do that. Volunteers are needed for about 7 to 10 nights during the peak of the spawn which usually occurs in late April. The time you would stay is up to you. Fish are present pretty much all night long. Humans are also active in the area throughout the night. Many folks come just to look at the fish and many bring their kids along. After 10:00pm, the numbers of visitors drops off quite a bit, but Warden Pfeiffer has seen folks in the area at all times of the night and early morning.

If you are interested in lending a hand, please contact Lynn Schlueter at (715) 476-2893 by April 1, with the number of nights and times of night that you would be available and we'll work out a schedule.

A Lythrum by any other name

According to an article from "The Lake Connection," published by Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Inc., Purple Loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria, an invasive exotic plant that the tax payers of Wisconsin and other states have paid big bucks to eradicate) was seen for sale by members of the Wisconsin Association of Lakes while visiting a greenhouse in the Chetek area. They immediately alerted the owner, then contacted the DNR and Wisconsin Association of Lakes (WAL) to report their finding. The plants were Lythrum virgatum, sold under the name "Morden's Gleam." The greenhouse owner, who received the plants from a grower in Iowa, immediately removed the plants from the shelf and contacted the DNR. Even though the DNR was not immediately able to confirm whether the variety was or was not a hybrid, the greenhouse owner incinerated the plants in the interest of the community, the environment and his business. The plant was labeled as genus-Lythrum and species Virgatum variety-Morden's Gleam. The greenhouse owner stated that if it had been labeled "Purple Loosestrife" it would not have been bought, much less sold. Although Wisconsin law prohibits the sale and transportation of loosestrife, situations like this do occur. We all need to be on the alert for loosestrife and loosestrife hybrids.

According to WDNR PUBL-WM-250-95, as of 1987, state law bans selling, distributing or planting loosestrife. This ban covers both Lythrum salicaria and Lythrum virgatum. It includes all cultivars, hybrids, or so-called sterile varieties, i.e., Rose Queen, Atropurpureum, Happy, The Rocket, Morden's Pink or Rose, Roseum/Superbum, Morden's Gleam, Purple Spire, Mr. Roberts, Columbia Pink, Dropmore Purple, Robert's Lady Sackville, The Beacon, or Fire Candle.

While on the subject of Purple Loosestrife, the Turtle Flambeau Flowage-Trude Lake (TFF-TL) Association and the DNR expresses thanks to those Association members who volunteered their help with the Purple Loosestrife survey this summer. It was reported that some plants were found along the Manitowish River and in the Lake of the Falls area. Removal of these plants was handled by the DNR.

Lake monitoring project

— by Arlen Wanta

It seems that it was only a few weeks ago when we watched the ice leave the lake, and here it is, late fall already.

During the summer, Jim Leever and I have been taking dissolved oxygen readings and water clarity readings, using a DO meter and Secchi Disc. We will continue to take the DO meter readings throughout the winter. This base line data must be collected over several years in order to establish a profile of the lake.

We have noticed that water clarity varies from one section of the lake to another on the same day, as well as from month to month. The same is true of the dissolved oxygen levels. It is very interesting to see how the oxygen levels change with the seasons. As the water warms, the deeper areas of the lake stratify and, by early summer, oxygen levels drop significantly from about 18 feet on down, to where there is almost no oxygen present below that point. As the water cools in early fall, oxygenated water mixes to deeper levels, until the lake is no longer stratified before freeze up.

Each month, we have taken samples from Murray's Landing, the Horseshoe Lake area, Baraboo, Norway Point, Lake Ten, the dam and Lake Bastine. We would like volunteers to sample Lake of the Falls, at the park area and Trude Lake. Sampling requires only a few hours each month. If anyone is interested in helping, please call one of the officers, Jim Leever or me.

We have our lake association organized and operating and, as members, let's all get involved in making it successful. Please help make the association an active part of future management decisions affecting our lake.

Litter happens

— by Jim Leever

At the Lake Association meeting on October 9, the subject of littering came up. Some members commented that they had on occasion seen paper, bottles and cans floating in the water or lying at shorelines. One member spoke of seeing debris at a vacated ice fishing site last winter. In still another case, a bottle was seen floating in a quiet bay in the general vicinity of a fishing boat. Our member motored over and picked the bottle out of the water. No words were exchanged.

It's truly regrettable that despite signs and reminders, there is always a small percentage of thoughtless people who consistently litter. For most of us, however, it's a matter of oversight. We forget to make that final check at a camp or picnic site, or else a gust of wind takes away a napkin when we're not looking. While littering can happen even with the best of intentions, nothing spoils the beauty of nature and the tranquility of the moment more than the sign of a piece of trash. So, take care not to unintentionally litter; be a good steward, and if it is doable, pick up any litter that you find.

Our thanks to the members who raised the subject at the meeting, and for their efforts to maintain the natural beauty of the Flowage. Our thanks also to Dennis O'Brien (DNR) and Melanie Eklof for the work in campsite maintenance and management.

Winter stars

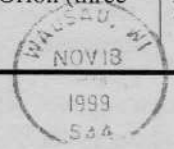
— by Frank Kilgore

Three days before Christmas the moon is full — a good time to have an evening sleigh ride. If you want to see the moon as a crescent, watch the sunset on December 8 or 9. The new moon is on the seventh and the crescent might be hard to see on the eighth but should be clearly in view on the ninth. You can see the sliver of an old moon before dawn on December 5 and 6 and January 3 and 4. The moon's cycle repeats itself every 29½ days so a new moon again occurs on January sixth.

Looking south, Jupiter is the brightest object with Saturn east of it. Saturn is not nearly so bright and can be mistaken for a star. Looking higher in the sky you will see the Milky Way. Overhead is Cassiopeia (the W). The Pleiades (the Seven Sisters), the Hyades (arrowhead), and Orion (three stars in a row) are further to the east with Orion nearest the horizon. Using binoculars the Pleiades and the Hyades are beautiful. Notice how white the stars are. These are among the youngest and hottest stars in the sky. Looking at Orion with binoculars will help you see M42, the glow below Orion's belt. Stars are being formed there. Betelgeuse is a reddish star above Orion's belt. It is a very old star. As it has aged it has grown to a size that would include the Earth and Mars if it were the sun. In five billion or so years astronomers say our sun, as it ages, will probably grow in size like Betelgeuse.

I sometimes get a kink in my neck from looking up at the night sky and once or twice almost tipped over backward and landed on my duff.

When I am out on the Flowage on a dark night it is easy to see where the towns that surround us are. The light they cast in the night sky can locate Park Falls, Butternut, Glidden, Mercer, Manitowish Waters, and Lac Du Flambeau. Light shields on streetlights and yard lights would help reduce this glow. One of the wonders of northern Wisconsin is the dark night sky. With a growing population, stray light from all sources will reduce the darkness we now know. Intelligent use of outdoor lighting will help keep our skies dark.



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